

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 723 without my signature.

No one believes more strongly than I in the importance of teaching our children tolerance for all persons, irrespective of race, gender, nationality, ethnicity, religious creed, disability, or sexual orientation. However, this bill is largely duplicative of current efforts to provide more avenues to teach about tolerance and human rights.

For example, current law already establishes a Center for the Excellence on the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, Human Rights, and Tolerance to provide teachers the training and resources to effectively teach about these subjects. In addition, the State Board of Education has adopted a Model Curriculum for Human Rights and Genocide that is available to all schools. Finally, with respect to tolerance of a more immediate nature, the California Department of Education has posted on its website model policies on the prevention of bullying and hate-motivated behavior.

For these reasons, I am unable to sign this bill at this time.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger